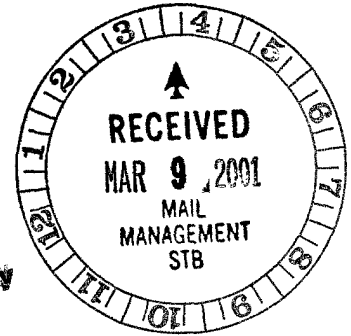


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THOMPSON
HINE & FLORY LLP

Attorneys at Law

March 9, 2001



ENTERED
Office of the Secretary

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Part of
Public Record

The Honorable Vernon A. Williams
Office of the Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
Case Control Unit
1925 K St. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

RE: STB Ex Parte No. 582 (Sub-No. 1, *Major Rail Consolidation Procedures*
Oral Argument

Dear Secretary Williams:

Pursuant to the decision served by the Board dated February 23, 2001 in this proceeding, the National Industrial Transportation League ("League") respectfully requests an opportunity to participate in the oral argument in this matter scheduled for April 5, 2001. The League desires to address the following issues: (a) the legal basis for the Board to issue proposed rules that will provide, among other things, for "enhanced competition" in merger applications and merger approvals; (b) the need for the Board's proposed rules to better define what is meant by "enhanced competition" and the scope of such enhanced competition; and, (c) appropriate contents and requirements for service assurance plans contemplated by the agency's proposed rules.

The League respectfully requests fifteen (15) minutes to present its views. Mr. Nicholas DiMichael, General Counsel of the League, will be presenting the League's views.

Sincerely,


NICHOLAS J. DIMICHAEL